GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:758
ANSWERED ON:01.03.2016
Fertility of Soil
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has evaluated the fertility of soil/arable land across the country, if so, the norms adopted for the purpose and the extent of micronutrients deficiency noticed in the country, State-wise;

(b) the details of the schemes and projects under implementation to check the declining fertility of agricultural land and improve the fertility of soil for increasing agricultural production in the country including Gujarat; and

(c) the success achieved thereunder, so far, in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

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(a): Government has launched Soil Health Card Scheme to evaluate fertility of soils/ arable land across the country and to provide soil test based fertilizer recommendation to farmers in the country. The basic norms adopted for the purpose are :-

(i) The soil samples collection should be GIS based and
(ii) In irrigated areas, samples will be drawn in a grid of 2.5 ha and in rainfed areas sampling will be done in 10 ha. Grid.

The assessment made by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) under All India Coordinated Research Project on 'Micro and Secondary Nutrients and Pollutant Elements in soils and Plants' revealed that nearly 43.0, 12.1, 5.5, 5.4, and 18.3 per cent samples were deficient in Zinc, Iron, Manganese, Coper and Boron, respectively across the country. State-wise details are given in Annexure.

(b): Government is implementing Soil Health Management and Soil Health Card Schemes during 12th Plan period in the country including Gujarat. Soil test based application of fertilizers is essential to improve soil health and productivity. The Government is promoting soil test based balanced and judicious use of chemical fertilizers, bio-fertilizers and locally available organic manures like Farm Yard Manure, compost, Vermi Compost and Green manure to maintain soil health and its productivity. 'Soil Health Card' (SHC) scheme has been launched in February 2015 to assist State Governments to evaluate fertility in all 14 crore farm holdings and issue soil
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health cards to farmers regularly in a cycle of 2 years. Soil health cards provide information to farmers on nutrient status of their soil along with recommendations on appropriate dosage of nutrients to be applied for improving soil health and its fertility.

(c) In 2015-16, so far, under Soil Health Card Scheme against target of 100 lakh soil samples, 81 lakh collected and against the target of 5 crore Soil health Cards 1.12 crore cards issued to farmers & 2 crore cards under printing.

Under Soil Health Management (SHM) scheme, setting up of 103 new static and 77 new mobile soil testing laboratories and 269 existing Soil Testing Laboratories strengthened have been sanctioned during 2014-15 and 2015-16.